

STRESS AND STRESSORS

- Kinds of Stress

Stress: physical and psychological response to events, called *stressors*...

Eustress: stressor that is positive or motivating (a *challenge*, leading to a "focused" response)

Distress: stressor that is negative or damaging (a *threat*, leading to a "freeze" response)

** *Cognitive Appraisal* (Folkman and Lazarus, 1975) determines WHICH type of stress we experience

- Sources of Stress (Stressors)

** *Frustration*: results when attainment of some goal is prevented

** *Anxiety*: vague, generalized feeling apprehension

** *Conflict Situations*: stress results when an individual chooses between two or more options

1. **Approach-Approach** – have to choose between TWO *positive* choices ("win-win")

2. **Avoidance-Avoidance** – have to choose between TWO *negative* choices ("lose-lose")

3. **Approach-Avoidance** – have to make ONE choice that has *positive* and *negative* aspects

4. **Double Approach-Approach** – choose between TWO choices, each choice has *positive* and *negative* aspects

RESPONSES TO STRESS

- Physiological Responses

Mind to Body (Walter Cannon):

1. Sympathetic nervous system activates when emotions aroused,
2. epinephrine and norepinephrine released along with cortisol hormone,
3. creates body's "fight or flight" response (increase in heart-rate, energy, arousal)

General Adaptation Syndrome (Hans Selye, 1956):

body *physically* adapts to chronic stress in three phases

Stress → alarm (mobilize resources) → resistance (coping) → exhaustion

(Strength... explains physical exhaustion due to stress; Weakness... fails to account adequately for psychological factors)

- Psychological Responses

Stressor (work, school, relationships) → Emotional reaction (anger, anxiety, embarrassment)
AND/OR
Cognitive reaction (concentration problems, distractions)

Long-Term Effects: heart problems, chronic pain, insomnia, anxiety disorders and panic attacks, infertility, etc.

- Personality and Stress

TWO main personality types are described to explain HOW one's personality *predisposes* them towards a particular reaction to stress...

Type-A: 1. Temperament - competitive, hard-driving, impatient, anger-prone

2. heart-rate, blood pressure, and hormonal secretions increase when stressed

Type-B: 1. Temperament - more easy-going, relaxed and patient

2. typically remain calm when stressed

STRESS AND WELLNESS

(From "Stress Webquest")... Will be added later